



TO THE HIGH COVRT OF
Parliament. The humble Represen-
tion of the Commonaltie of the Weavers
Company, wherein they humbly pray that
a speedie course may be taken for their obtaining
Iustice according to their just desires toge-
ther with the charge against the Mr Bayliffes,
and Governours of the aforesaid Com-
pany as it is delivered into the
Committee of the Star-
Chamber.

Humbly sheweth, that through the many cor-
ruptions that hath arisen in the unfaithfull go-
vernment of our poore and distressed Company,
that there hath many abuses been frequently suf-
fered and committed by the means of our un-
faithfull Governours, to the ruin of your distressed the Com-
monalty of the Weavers Company, who look upon your ho-
nours as an object for our deliverance, and in whom our hap-
pinesse consisteth, without which we think our selves and poore
wives and children lost and captivated in poverty.

We should be silent but that we may boldly presume, that
that honour and iustice in your breasts, will be a meanes to re-
store us to happinesse, and turne our grieving to ioy, there are
many thousand of the poorer sort of us that are like to perish,
aliens eate the bread out of our mouths: thousands of intruders
are suffered into our trade through lack of iustice, and we ap-
peale to this honourable Court as a sanctuary for relief, humbly
praying that our sad condition may take possession in your ten-
der bowells, of compassion, withall to take notice it was the cry
A of

of the people of *Israel*, see *Lamentations* the 5. Chap. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. verses.

Remember O Lord what is come upon us, consider and behold our reproach,

2. *Our inheritance is turned to strangers, and our houses to Aliens.*

3. *We are Orphans and fatherlesse, and our mothers are as widowes.*

4. *We have drunken our water for money, and our wood is sold unto us.*

5. *Our necks are under persecution, and we labour and have no rest.*

This is our condition, and rather worse, that we should be in captivitie in a free land, if we had been sold for slaves, we should have been silent, our inheritance is posselt by strangers, in that they inioy as much priviledge in our freedoms as we that have served for it. We are Orphants in that we are destitute of relief. Our necks are under persecution, we labour and have no rest, & our povertie hath almost ruined us, our long expectation hath made us dispaire, therefore we humbly pray that you would forthwith appoint a Committee to make a speedy report of our condition, that we may no longer languish in delays, for we and our families shall perish, if there be not a speedy course taken for our reliefe.

We desire nothing but iustice, we must live by our trade, those that contend with us doe gain by suffering intruders, as they confessed unto us at the last treaty which we had with them (according to the Order of the Committee) that if they should consent to put the lawes in execution against Aliens and intruders that then the aliens and intruders would come against them for the money they had for suffering of them, the which they alleadged was so vast that it could not be raised among them.

We beseech your honours that we may have iustice against those who are guiltie of these things following.

The charge against the Mr. Wardens and Governours of the Weavers Company, as it is delivered in to the Committee of the Star-Chamber.

First charge, the admittance of Aliens to be Masters for sums of money, without serving seaven yeares, contrary to the Statutes

tutes of this Realm, Orders of the Lord Maior, and Court of Aldermen, and customes of the City, and Ordinances of the Company.

For the admittance of Aliens for sums of money to be Masters, contrary to the statute 1. R. 2. *ch. 9.* 21. H. 8. *ch. 16.* 32. H. 8. *ch. 16.* by which Statutes is exprest, that no stranger, artificer, not being denizen, shall set up, or keep any house, shop, or chamber within London, or any other City, Town, Burrough, or Village, wherein he shall exercise any handy craft or mystery, upon pain to forfeit all his Goods.

Secondly, without serving seaven yeares contrary to the Statute of the 5. *Eliz. ch. 4.* which saith, no manner of person should use any handicraft myserie, or manuall occupation, without serving seaven years an Apprentice, but contrary to this Act, they have admitted 3312. Aliens, and sums of money that the Bailiffes and Wardens have taken, amounteth to 1240. l. taken of Aliens for which the said Bailiffes and Wardens sold the rights and livelihood of the Commonaltie of Weavers, and other free mens of the City of London. Statute 5. *Eliz. ch. 4.*

The Customes of the City enioyneth every one to serve seaven yeares Apprentice, as it is exprest in an Order made 1647. 1630. pag. 6. and 7. contrary to a Decree made the 6. of April, *Anno Dom. 1585.* by a full Court of Assistants, wherein it was adiudged to be against law and conscience to admit of any Alien or English, but such as have served seaven yeares Apprentice within their Guild, and therefore they did order and decree, that they shall use and execute all lawfull meanes by vertue of the Weavers Charter, to avoid and remove all such persons, and English Farraigners, that doe place themselves within the liberties of the said Charter.

2. Charge. Their admitting of Natives to weave and set up weaving in their Guild, without serving seaven yeares, which is contrary to the statute and customes aforesaid, that is to say, 5. *Eliz. ch. 4.* and an order made 1627. pag. 1. 1630. p. 6 and a decree made, 1585.

3. Charge. Their exacting of fees of those persons that they make free, or admit, in taking a silver spoon of an ounce & 1/2 troy wair, and 5. s. 8. d. contrary to the statutes 22. H. 8. *ch. 4.* and

28 *H. 8. ch. 5.* upon the penaltie of 40. l. or else keep them out of the freedome, against an Order made, 1637. they were ordered by the Lord Maior and court of Aldermen that from thence forth they shou'd not take above 3. s. 4. d. and put none they make free to greater charges, and contemning and slighting the Orders of the Lord Maior and Court of Aldermen, in not obeying, and declaring in words, that they have no power to make orders for them

4 Their depriving the Commonaltie of their rights in the first Ordinance, which saith that the Bailiffes are to be chosen by the Bailiffes, Wardens, Assistants, and Commonaltie, which Ordinance is grounded upon the statute of the 3 of *Edw.* the 1. chap. 5. which saith, Elections ought to be free, thus depriving of the Commonaltie is the cause of our ruin.

1. Presidents the Company of Weavers of *London*, the whole commonaltie with the Livery, sit Elect, and chuse their Governours.

2. President, The Commons of the City of *London* in every Ward, Elect and chuse Common Councill men to act for them, the said Common Councill men have therefore voice in chusing the Lord Maior and Sheriffs,

5 Charge, their dismissing the Yeamondrie at their pleasure to their great hurt of the trade, contrary to severall Orders made by them and their Predicessors, as doth appeare by six severall Orders the 12. of *March.* 1594. the 37. of *Eliz.* and the 2. Order the 3. of *May,* 1625. the 3. Order made 5. of *July* 1625. And the 4. Order made the 17. of *July,* 1627. the 5. Order made 1630. And the 6. made 1633. All which orders did appoint a Yeamondry to search of themselves weekly, or as often as need did require to find out abuses in trade, and were to their paines and losse of time to. collect and have the Iourne mens quarterage, with all the arrerages thereof, and retain the same to their own use and benefit.

6. Their wasting the stock and treasure of the companie by waies, and have made that provision for the poor Member

of the Company, as by their trust they ought to have done, and that they may give an account to this Committee of the stock and treasure of the Company according to the last Order of the Parliament of England, bearing date 21. May.

1. By way, is by allowing them 12. d. a piece for their dinner for every day they sit in Court.

2. By defending the Actions brought By John Wood, and John Chambers against Henry Wollaston, Keeper of the Gaole of Newgate, and others for his and their unlawfull keeping and detaining the said Wood and Chambers 12. weeks in the Gaole of Newgate, which by their own confession cost them one hundred and fifty pound.

3. By way, by procuring for themselves a Monopolic, Patent which cost many hundred pounds.

4. By way, their pleading by counsell at the Committee, and making demurres, by giving large fees out of the stock, that is to feed the poor Members of the Companie that are ready to perish.

5. By way, by retaining and seeing of Lawyers that long pleading they did endeavour to obscure the truth, and keep your petitioners out of their rights, as may appeare by severall Orders made by the Lord Major and Court of Aldermen, and likewise by their not answering to our bill of Chancery, but demurring thereunto.

6. By way, their suing the members of other companies that are Weavers to have them change their copies to come under their ruining government.

7. Charge, their not putting the Lawes of the Realme, Ordinance of the Companie, and Orders of the Lord Maior and Court of Aldermen, and that power they had to put in execution against intruders.

1. The Governours have not put the lawes of the land in execution against Aliens, as namely, the 1. R. 3. c. 9. 21. H. 8. c. 16. 32. H. 8. c. 16. the 5. Eliz. c. 4. and a Decree made Anno Dom. 1585. an Order made in 1627. pag. 1. and 1630.

Wherein the Bailiffes and their successours were enioyned to sue down Rich. Fletcher, John Bates, William Smith, Hector Demount, and Edward Woodfine. And also all other that or shall offend in that

An Order
made 19. June
1633. by Sir
Mich. Rauston
Knight.

(57)
that kind, and see them all reformed either by indicting of them or by action or information, or bill of complaint, which they never did.

8. Charge. Lastly their procuring a pattennt and contract very destructive to to the trade and societie.

1. for procuring a Pattennt which they were not necessitated unto as may appeare by a petition presented to his Maiestie.

2. That the pattennt is destructive to the trade and societie as may appeare by the particulars following.

1. *Inprimis* in prohibiting many good and fitting mixtures of silk and other materials, and also very necessary and breadths were of many sorts of good and servicable usefull woven workes have been sould to the benefit of the Commonwealth.

2. Also that they may impose fines americiaments and to levy those fines by distresse recover by action of debt any law, statute, Ordinance, or proviso, to the contrary, notwithstanding that they might also at their wills and pleasure sell the Goods, Chuttles, and other things apertaining to the Company.

3. That without any act of Parliament, they cause mens goods to be forfeited, whereof they are to have the one half.

4. That they may take silver a spoone of an ounce and a halfe weight, or the value thereof, of every one they make free of their guild albeit the taking of them is against two acts of Parliament.

5. That they altered the Government of the Company from 12. Assistants to 20.

In lew of which Pattennt they contracted with his Maiestie, to see payd by the commonalty 7.d. upon every pound of silk wrought into broad stufs.

They contracted to take a bond of two hundred pounds of every Weaver thereof, for due performance of the said payments divers persons refusing to be bound they caused to be taken with Pursevants and brought before the Councell table and restrained of their liberties, untill they consented to performe the premises.

This

This Patten was procured and contract made without the knowledge or privity of the Commonalty yet their names used in both.

Every particular part of this charge is proved by many witnesses, and have waited time after time upon the honourable Committee, and still our Governours have had the libertie to bring in new matter which hath obstructed the reporting of it to the houses of Parliament, that still when we have had thoughts of a period of the businesse, we have been forced to begin again, that now we are in the same condition that we were in a yeare since, but we desire that the honourable Committee would be pleased to sit this present Wednesday according to their order, and take a full account from us and our Governours, and make a report to the house according to their order, that we may not wait any longer, for it consumes our estates, and it will bring us to ruine.

Severall considerations of the charge, with many reasons why we so confidently presume that this honourable house will grant our desires.

1. That no person whatsoever, should use the trade of weaving but such whom have served seaven yeares, we humbly conceive your honours are senceable how unreasonable a thing it is, that Aliens should have a priviledge within this City, and use manufacterie, when there is severall good and wholsome lawes for the preventing natives from dwelling, using, working, on any manufactory within the City of London or libertie thereof. Statutes in this nature are plentiful, and though in the second yeare of the raign of this King, he granted to the Aliens a patent to worke and use their manufactors: yet after in the Eleventh yeare of this King upon complaint made, he reversed that patent, if it had not been reversed, yet it could have been but in the capacitie of a patent or letter of grace, which at the common law they could have had but little reliefe if they had been presented

ted or indicted, or informed against, instance the statute against Monopolies, in the 21. King *James* ch, 3. that all Commissions, Grants, Licences, Letters, Charters, Patents, Proclamations, Inhibitions, Restraints, Warrants, of assistance, and as other matters and things tending to that purpose, be it ordained that the force and validity of them, and of every of them, ought to be, and ever hereafter shall be examined, tryed, heard, and determined by and according to the common Lawes of this Realme, and not otherwise, this statute standeth in force to this day and no doubt by it we might have reliefe, but we have appealed to your honours to doe us iustice in it, we humbly pray that we might be invested with power from the Parliament, to suppress Farrainers and Intruders, we might doe it by the common law, but then our work would be endlesse, for the corruptions of our Government is such, that they will continually admit of intruders: and therefore we apply our selves in all humilitie to your honours for power to prevent the like evils and corruptions in the government of the company for the future.

A 2. Charge, that is proved, is their admitting of Natives to the freedome, that have not served, this is cleared against the custome of the City that little may be said of it.

A 3. Charge is their acting of fees of every man that made free of our Guil, a thing destructive to many which go all dayes of their life without their freedome.

in regard of their poverty, by reason of the unjust Governement the trade is so poore, that they never saw the value of the Fees they exact in money, to gather in their life.

4, Charge, the Governours depriving the commons of having a vote in electing of the Bayly and Wardens, which is the undeniable birth-right of the Commons: Is not the high Court of Parliament chosen and elected by the Commons of *England*, then we may boldly affirme, that the propriety of choise of Governours for the *Weavers* Company, doth lye in the Commons of the *Weavers* Company. Besides we have a prefixt Ordinance, that the Commons shall every yeare assemble, and chuse them a Bayly that shall governe for the next yeare ensuing.

And by vertue of this Ordinance one *Wood* and one *Chambers* at the day of Election made their appearance at the Hall, and were present at the Election; upon which the Master, Bailieffes, and Assistance sent them before a Magistrate, and had them committed to prison. For wick they brought their Action at the Common Law, and obtained a Judgement by default, for the Defendants could not plead a justification; the which sheweth, that the Commons have an undeniable title in the choice of their governours; besides, it would be contrary to reason for any people in civell affaires to obey any Magistrate which he hath not a libertie to chuse. Likewise the example is frequent in all Elections of all kind of Officers in the Common wealth, as for the Electing of the Lord Major and Sherieffs of *London*, and for the Electing of the Governours of Companies about 300. yeares since were chosen by a popular Election: but then in the dayes of King *Edward* the third, the Barons of *London* being growne wicked and into all manner of vice, that they would chuse such officers that would countenance their vice, then the more civeller Citizens did obtaine a Charter from the King, that none but the cloakmen of *London* should chuse their Officers. But now blessed be God, there is more conformity to the Civell Law among men in these dayes. So that in former time, when a generall choice was corrupted in continuing a long time, and a more peculiar choise was obtained (namely amongst their Livery) And now the long continuance of this choice being corrupted, and is become a grievance, So that the same reason why it should

be enacted, may be a reason why it should be dissanulled.

Yet it is the received opinion, that nothing is Law to any people, but that which shall be for the preservation of the generalitie of them.

Besides in *Magna Charta*, made in the daies of King *Henry* the third, and an order confirmed by King *Edward* the first, that the City of *London* should enjoy all its ancient Customes which it used to have.

Another Ordinance is, the want of the executing the Lawes and Ordinances of the Company.

As that no Forrainers shall trade, buy, or sell in the City of *London*, or liberties thereof. And notwithstanding our Governours dayly suffer these abuses.

And the better to nourish these corruptions they have dismissed the Yeomanry, which was to search and present defaults and many times when parties have beene presented for defaults, the Governours have privily (or oft wee know taken bribes) when their punishment should have been publike, and for these and few yeares last past, have taken for bribes above 1200 li.

Which is against the Law of the Land, in that they being appointed for the Execution of the Law, doe take bribes and compositions for their owne profit, and thereby the penalties are not inflicted, which is great dammage to the Commonalty.

Likewise the many decrees and order made by the Governours formerly, and by the Lord Major and Court of Aldermen, that no Alien borne, nor Native should use the trade of Weaving, unless he had served seven yeares, notwithstanding these Orders, Ordinances, and Decrees, they unlawfully have admitted many and suffer many thousands to the great discomfort of our Petitions.

Likewise in the yeare 1627 upon complaint made to the Lord Mayor, and Court of Aldermen of the many intruders that then were, it was ordered by that Court, that the Master, Bayliffe, and Wardens, forthwith should put in suite either by Action, information, or indictment according to the Statute of the 5th. of *Queene Elizabeth*, provided in that case against all intruders.

Yet notwithstanding this Order the Governours neglected the execution thereof, and through the many inconveniences that arise

rise thereby, the Communalitie was inforced again to comp'aine to the then Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, and then it was Ordained and Decreed for ever, That if the Bayliffe or Wardens should neglect the due execution of that Decree made in July, 1627. if the Bayliffe and Wardens, or their successors upon sufficient prooffe made, should hereafter neglect the putting in suite the Law of the land, according to the aforesaid Order against aliens and natives, that had not served the full terme of seaven yeares, and upon complaint and proof made hereof, it was ordained by the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen, that such Bayliffes and Wardens, should be forthwith suspended from bearing offices in that company for ever after.

These and many other crimes they are guilty of, for the which in the raigne of this King they obtained a pardon.

The Pardon granted to the Governours of the Weavers Company.

ANd furthermore, we being graciously pleased to provide for the vnity and improvements of the said Bayliffes, Wardens, Assistance and communalitie, and their successors, as well touching the premises last mentioned, as touching all or any errors, offences in matter of our speciall grace, certain knowledge and mere motion, have pardoned: remitted and released, and by these presents for us our heires and successors, do pardon, remit and release unto the said Bayliffes, Wardens and Assistance, and Communalitie of *Weavers*, of *London* and their successors, receiving, and taking of the said silver spones of every or any member of the Company as aforesaid; and also all and every manner of defectes errors, misdemeanours or offences whatsoever, which at any time or times heretofore have benne Committed or done by the said Bayliffes, Wardens, Assistance and Communalitie, or by the Bayliffes, Wardens, Assistance or any of them in all or any matters and things whatsoever, touching or concerning the said Company and the Government thereof, or their undue and unlawfull regulation, and arising of their said trade or trades.

Wherefore we do for us our heires and successors, further will, declare, require and command, that the said Bayliffes, Wardens, Assistance

Assistance and Communalitie, or their successors by any our Officers or Ministers at any time hereafter, for any of the said offences matters or things by us pardoned: or ment to be pardoned, shall not hereafter be sued, molested, troubled or despited.

Thus they have been pardoned for their crimes, now trespassing again they ought to have Justice done upon them.

Our humble request is to every member in Parliament, that they would be pleased to lay our sad condition to heart, Wee being confident, that our necessity and poverty will take some impression and bring forth to us now a deliverance; without which, We our Wives and children, shall perish for lack of bread. We are confident that you have more honourable principles then to suffer strangers to eat the bread out of our mouths.

And wee shall ever pray, &c.

In pag. 3. line 15. for 3312. read 312. in p. 4. l. 15. for Weavers. r. Mercers, line last for have made, r. have not made

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